

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND).

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 5 June 1874;—for,

- COPIES "of the GENERAL RULES and REGULATIONS for the Management of the DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUMS in *Ireland* having reference to 'Tenders:'"
- "Of the RESOLUTION of the Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, protesting against the Eighth of the said Rules: "
- "Of the STATEMENT forwarded to the Irish Government on the subject of the said Resolution and Rule: "
- "Of the CORRESPONDENCE on the said Subject between the said Governors, officially and individually, and the Irish Government: "
- "And, of the CORRESPONDENCE on the same Subject between the Governors of other District Lunatic Asylums in *Ireland* and the Irish Government."

Dublin Castle, }
23 July 1874. }

T. H. BURKE.

(Mr. Sykes.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
31 July 1874.

COPIES of the GENERAL RULES and REGULATIONS for the Management of the DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUMS in *Ireland* having reference to Tenders:—Of the RESOLUTION of the Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, protesting against the Eighth of the said Rules:—Of the STATEMENT forwarded to the Irish Government on the Subject of the said Resolution and Rule:—Of the CORRESPONDENCE on the said Subject between the said Governors, officially and individually, and the Irish Government:—And, of the CORRESPONDENCE on the same Subject between the Governors of other District Lunatic Asylums in *Ireland* and the Irish Government.

COPIES of the GENERAL RULES and REGULATIONS for the Management of DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUMS in *Ireland* (made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland on 23rd February 1874) having reference to Tenders.

RULE V. All contracts to be entered into on behalf of the asylum relating to the maintenance, clothing, and lodging, or for any other purpose relating to the general management of the patients, shall be made and entered into by the governors, in the name of the resident medical superintendent, and the governors shall require sealed tenders to be made for such contracts in the manner usual in such cases.

VI. Notice of the nature and conditions of the contract to be entered into, of the last day and hour on which tenders will be received, and the day on which the tenders will be opened, shall be given in some newspaper circulating in the district, not less than 10 days previous to the last day on which such tenders shall be received; and no tender shall be opened by the clerk or any governor or other person before the day specified in such notice, or otherwise than at a meeting of said governors.

VII. When any tender shall be accepted, the party making the tender shall, in pursuance of these regulations, enter into a contract with the governors, in the name of the resident medical superintendent, containing the terms, conditions, and stipulations mutually agreed upon; and whenever the governors shall deem it advisable, the party contracting shall in like manner find one or more surety or sureties, who shall enter into a bond in such penalty as the governors shall think fit, conditioned for the due performance of the contract, or shall otherwise secure the same.

VIII. All tenders shall be made and contracts entered into respectively according to the respective forms B and C herewith annexed, and all tenders for contracts, whether accepted or rejected, signed as such by the chairman of the board at which they have been opened, together with a schedule of the accepted tenders in the form herewith annexed, marked D, shall be duly forwarded to the office of the inspectors for examination. All receipts for disbursements in regard to current expenditure, duly authenticated by the board, shall be regularly filed and kept in the office of the asylum.

COPY of CORRESPONDENCE, &c., between the Government and the Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, with reference to the "Rules and Regulations for the Management of the District Lunatic Asylums in *Ireland*," having reference to Tenders.

My Lord,

Terrace, Limerick, 31 December 1872.

I HAVE the honour to send to your Excellency a memorial unanimously adopted at a meeting of the governors of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum.

His Excellency
the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

I am, &c.
(signed) W. Monnell.

MINUTE OF PROCEEDINGS of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, at their Meeting held Tuesday, the 31st December 1873.

PRESENT :

Colonel the Right Hon. W. Monsell, M.P., in the Chair,

The Right Rev. Dr. Butler.
The Right Worshipful the Mayor.
William Spillane, Esq.
Edward W. O'Brien, Esq.
Henry Lyons, Esq., M.P.
Captain M. Gavin.

Eugene O'Callaghan, Esq.
Michael R. Ryan, Esq.
Thomas Boyce, Esq.
John M'Donnell, Esq.
S. E. De Vere, Esq.

A resolution was proposed by Stephen E. De Vere, Esq., and seconded by the City High Sheriff, and adopted unanimously, requesting the appointment of a committee of inquiry in certain subjects connected with the asylum, and of which resolution the following extract has reference to the Privy Council rules referred to in the Order.

"His Excellency, the governors respectfully submit, will the more readily admit the necessity of granting this searching inquiry, as his Excellency must be aware that under the Privy Council rules and regulations with reference to lunatic asylums, the board of governors is to a great degree stripped of its powers, which are now practically vested in the inspectors and the local medical superintendent.

"The governors conclude by suggesting to Her Majesty's Government that the Privy Council rules applicable to the management and discipline of lunatic asylums should be revised, with a view to confirming the authority of the board of governors over their own officers, and establishing and maintaining their legitimate independence and responsibility."

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 4 January 1873.

I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, forwarding a memorial adopted at a meeting of the governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum held on that date, and to acquaint you that it will be duly considered by his Excellency, and that a further communication will be made to you on the subject.

Colonel the Right Hon. Wm. Monsell, M.P.,
Tervoe, Limerick.

I have, &c.
(signed) T. H. Burke.

EXTRACT from LETTER of the Under Secretary, dated 10th April 1873, to the Chairman of the Board of Governors of Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

ADVERTING to the concluding paragraph of the resolution of the 31st December, which states that the existing Privy Council rules have, to a great degree, stripped the board of governors of their power, and practically vested them in the inspectors of lunatic asylums and the local medical superintendent, and in which a revision of the rules is asked for, with a view to confirming the authority of the board of governors over their own officers, and especially to maintaining their legitimate independence and responsibility, his Excellency would be glad if the governors would be kind enough to point out the precise rules which have the effect of transferring the powers of the board to the inspectors and resident medical superintendent; and he would also be glad, if they would suggest in what way they propose that the rules should be revised with a view of remedying the evils of which they complain.

A REPLY to the LETTER of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of 10th April 1873, was adopted unanimously by the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum on the 20th May 1873.

The following extracts from that reply have reference to the Rules referred to in the Order:—

"The Rules of 1862 provided that on the acceptance of a contract by the board of governors the rejected tenders should be forthwith transmitted to the inspectors for their examination and approval. The governors indignantly protested against this provision, but protested in vain. In the Code of 1871, the framers have omitted the words 'for their approval,' probably perceiving, after nine years' consideration, that it is an absurdity to talk of submitting a rejected tender for approval; but the provision that the rejected tenders shall be submitted to the inspectors for examination is still retained. The

governors again emphatically protest against this order. There is no analogous rule or practice in the case of gaol boards, boards of guardians, grand juries, or presentment sessions. The fact that the funds for lunatic asylums are in the first instance lent by the State forms no excuse for this derogatory exception. Those funds are advanced on ample security, that of a compulsory presentment. They are repaid, and ultimately fall, like gaol and grand jury charges, upon the local ratepayers.

"The governors point to this regulation as one which fatally affects their independence. It subjects their proceedings to the revision of the inspectors in a matter which concerns not alone their discretion but their honour.

"If in this case (Rule 26, as to the admission of paying patients, is referred to) as in the case of rejected tenders already adverted to, the honesty and good sense of the governors cannot be trusted, the principal of centralised administration had better be fully carried out, and the management of the institution intrusted in name, as well as in reality, to the State.

"The governors now conclude their reply. They firmly believe that the efficient working of the lunatic asylum relief system depends upon the efficiency of the board of local governors, aided by a duly subordinate official staff; that the board cannot be efficient unless its independence be secured, and that they have laid before his Excellency a case which proves that the independence of local boards is not duly respected or provided for."

Limerick District Lunatic Asylum,

Limerick, 30 August 1873.

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th instant, conveying his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's answer to the Board of the District Lunatic Asylum of Limerick, which shall be laid before them at their next meeting.

I am, &c.

(signed) *E. Maziere Courtenay.*

To the Under Secretary for Ireland,
Dublin Castle.

EXTRACT from LETTER of the Under Secretary, dated 28th August 1873, to the Resident Medical Superintendent of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

"In concluding this part of the letter, his Excellency would point out that the experience gained by these painful proceedings has not only already led to important changes at the asylum, but will suggest alterations in rules and methods of inspection and management.

"He trusts that the governors will recognise in these facts the earnest desire of the Government, that the management of the asylums should be efficiently and impartially conducted, and in this way to meet the wishes of the governors at Limerick, whose zeal he cannot doubt.

"He must, however, repeat his opinion, that he cannot see matter requiring inquiry into the conduct of the inspectors, and must on this point refuse the request of the governors.

"The only part of the letter of the governors which remains for consideration, is that in which they discuss the rules of the Privy Council.

"His Excellency has carefully considered their views, but he does not consider it desirable without fuller inquiry, to alter the rules made by the Privy Council in 1870.

"He will, however, bring under the notice of the Privy Council the various objections made by the governors to these rules, and will suggest that they should be referred to a committee who will inquire into the matter, and will no doubt be able to give a personal hearing to any of the governors who may wish to urge their objections.

"His Excellency will further cause copies of their objections to be sent to the boards of governors of the other lunatic asylums in Ireland, with the view of eliciting their opinion on the subject, and he confidently trusts that the result of the inquiry will be to remove any well-founded grounds of objection which may be urged against the rules."

COPY of LETTER of the Under Secretary to the Resident Medical Superintendent, District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick.

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 10 September 1873.

WITH reference to my letter of the 28th ultimo, I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to transmit to you, for the information of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, the enclosed copy of a circular which his Excellency has caused to be addressed to the boards of governors of district lunatic asylums in Ireland, in reference to the objections urged by the Limerick Board, in their letter of the 23rd of May last, to the

code

code of rules and regulations for the management of lunatic asylums in Ireland, made by the Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council in 1870.

I am, &c.
(signed) *T. H. Burke.*

The circulars referred to will be found with the "correspondence between the Government and the governors of other district lunatic asylums in Ireland" (see page 16).

Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick,
12 September 1873.

Sir,
I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th ultimo, enclosing a copy of a circular which his Excellency has caused to be addressed to the boards of governors of district lunatic asylums in Ireland, which shall be laid before the board of governors of this institution at their next meeting.

I am, &c.
(signed) *G. Muziere Courtney,*
Medical Superintendent.

The Under Secretary of State for Ireland,
Dublin Castle.

MINUTE OF PROCEEDINGS of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, at their Meeting held Tuesday the 7th of October 1873.

PRESENT.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor.
The Right Rev. Dr. Butler, O.S.
The Very Rev. Dean O'Brien,
D.D., F.R.
Colonel the Right Hon. William
Monsell, M.P.
Edward William O'Brien, Esq.,
D.L.

Michael R. Ryan, Esq., City High
Sheriff.
Stephen E. De Vere, Esq.
John McDonnell, Esq.
Eugene O'Callaghan, Esq.
William Spillane, Esq.
Lawrence Quinlivan, Esq.
Thomas Boyse, Esq.

Resolved, That following reply to the Lord Lieutenant's letter of the 28th August be adopted, and that the Lord Lieutenant of the County, the Right Hon. William Monsell, be requested to communicate it to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant. * * *

The governors have read with extreme pleasure that portion of his Excellency's letter which says that "the experience gained by those painful proceedings had not only already led to important changes in the asylum, but will suggest alterations in rules and methods of inspection and management;" and the governors confidently hope that those alterations will be such as will conduce to harmony between the governing and inspecting authorities.

The governors thank his Excellency for bringing under the notice of the Privy Council the various objections made by them to the existing Privy Council rules. They can entertain no doubt but that his Excellency, with the advice of the Privy Council, will perceive that some of those rules are unfavourable to the discipline of the institution, and that the rule with respect to rejected contracts is an imputation upon the honour of the Board.

The governors are most anxious to be placed in a position in which, without sacrifice of self-respect, they may be able to continue their exertions for the due care of the helpless lunatic poor. They believe such also to be the sincere desire of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant; and they feel a confident hope that the alterations in the inspection and "management" of the institution, and the changes which his Excellency and the Privy Council may effect in the rules and regulations, will be such as may restore harmony, and enable the governors to direct their attention to measures for securing greater efficiency and better discipline.

Adopted unanimously.

Council Office, Dublin Castle,
13 December 1873.

Sir,

I AM directed to acquaint you, for the information of the board of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, that the objections made by them to the general rules and regulations made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council for the management of district lunatic asylums in Ireland, together with the answers received from the boards of governors of the other district lunatic asylums, to whom the objections were communicated, have been laid by his Excellency's directions before the Privy Council, and have been referred to a committee which will meet for the purpose of considering the same on Wednesday, the 7th of January next, at 11 o'clock, a.m., in the Council Chamber, Dublin Castle; and the committee will be prepared on that occasion to give a personal hearing to any governors of the Limerick, or other asylum, who may wish to be heard on the subject.

I am, &c.
(signed) *R. N. Matheson.*

The Resident Medical Superintendent of the
Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

PAPERS RELATING TO

Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick,
17 December 1873.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, stating, for the information of the board of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, that the objections made by them to the "General Rules and Regulations" made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council in the year 1870, together with the answers received from boards of governors of other district lunatic asylums, to whom such were communicated, have been laid by his Excellency's direction before the Privy Council, and referred by them to a committee, and beg to inform you I shall submit it at a meeting of the board of governors to be held the 30th instant, to which date the consideration of all correspondence was postponed.

I have, &c.
(signed) *E. Maziere Courtenay*,
Medical Superintendent.

To the Clerk of the Privy Council,
Dublin Castle.

Limerick District Asylum, 1 January 1874.

Sir,
In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, I am directed by the board of governors of the Limerick District Asylum, to forward a copy of the enclosed Minute, passed at their last meeting on 30th December 1873.

I am, &c.
(signed) *E. Maziere Courtenay*,
Medical Superintendent.

R. N. Matheson, Esq.,
Clerk of the Council.

MINUTES of Proceedings of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, at their Meeting held on the above date.

Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick,
30 December 1873.

Sir,

THE letter from the clerk of the Privy Council, dated 13th December 1873, having been submitted and read, —

It was proposed by Stephen E. De Vere, Esq., seconded by Edward Wm. O'Brien, Esq., and resolved :

That the board of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum beg to acknowledge the receipt of his Excellency's communication of the 13th December 1873, and begs to refer his Excellency to the communication of the board on the subject, bearing date 30th May 1873.

The board made the suggestions therein contained, after mature deliberation, and with no other view, save that of obtaining such a modification in the Privy Council rules as might render them consistent with the honour of the board, and the successful administration of a great public charity.

The board thinks it unnecessary to add any arguments to those already advanced.

(signed) *William Monell*,
Chairman.

A true copy,

(signed) *E. Maziere Courtenay*,
Medical Superintendent.

COPY of LETTER of the Under Secretary to the Resident Medical Superintendent, District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick.

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 11 April 1874.

I AM directed by the Lords Justices to transmit to you, for the information of the board of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, copy of a letter addressed by direction of their Excellencies to Stephen E. de Vere, Esq., in answer to one received from him requesting on behalf of himself and his brother, Sir Vere de Vere, that their names might be removed from the list of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, and of which he states that he has transmitted a copy to your board.

I am, &c.
(signed) *T. H. Burke*.

Reply to Mr. de Vere referred to in above letter will be found in "correspondence between the Government and individual members of the board of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum" (see p. 10).

EXTRACT from LETTER of the Under Secretary, dated 11th April 1874, to the Resident Medical Superintendent, District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick.

"I AM directed by the Lord Justices to transmit to you, for the information of the governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, and for the use of the institution, 30 copies of an order of the late Lord Lieutenant in Council, dated 23rd February last, containing rules and regulations for the management of District Lunatic Asylums, in place of those of the 18th of August 1870 and the 16th of May 1872, which are thereby revoked.

"In my letter of the 10th September last, a copy of a circular addressed to the board of governors of the other district lunatic asylums, with reference to the objections of the governors of the Limerick Asylum to the regulations of 1870, was transmitted to you for the information of your board.

"Of the 21 boards of governors to whom that circular was sent, three considered it unnecessary to take any action thereon; fourteen expressed approval of the rules of 1870, either absolutely or subject to some suggested alteration, and four of these expressed specially their approval of the rule requiring the transmission of rejected tenders to the inspectors. In the cases of three other boards who expressed opinions unfavourable to that rule, it appeared that in one case the objection was made under a misapprehension, inasmuch as reference was made to a supposed explanation of the rule in 1869, and that in another a minority of the board approved of the rule. In only one instance was a general concurrence in the views of the Limerick Board expressed.

"The objections of the Limerick Board, and the answers to the circular, having been referred to a committee of the Privy Council, all the boards of governors were informed of the time appointed for considering them. The governors of the Limerick Asylum declined to attend, and only one governor of any other asylum appeared.

"The committee carefully considered all the objections, as well as some suggestions of additions to the rules, and upon their report, the order was made, of which copies are now transmitted to you."

Sir,

Limerick District Asylum, 14 April 1874.

I AM to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, with the copy of a letter addressed by direction of the Lords Justices to Stephen E. de Vere, Esq.; also a parcel containing copies of the Privy Council rules, and a letter from their Excellencies, which shall be duly laid before the governors of this asylum.

The Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Maxiere Courtenay*,
Medical Superintendent.

MINUTE of PROCEEDINGS of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, at a special Meeting held on Friday the 17th day of April 1874.

HAVING read a letter from the Under Secretary, dated Dublin Castle, 11th April 1874, transmitting, by direction of their Excellencies the Lords Justices, 30 copies of an Order of his Excellency, the late Lord Lieutenant in Council, containing rules and regulations for the management of district lunatic asylums, in place of those of 1870 and 1872, thereby revoked; It was proposed by Edward William O'Brien, Esq., D.L., seconded by the very Rev. Dean O'Brien, D.D.:—

The Board of Governors recognise with pleasure the wisdom and justice of the course adopted by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in submitting their representations, with regard to certain changes in the rules proposed by them for the opinion of the other boards of Governors in Ireland, and in convening the Privy Council for the express purpose of taking these representations into consideration. They are also sensible of the spirit of courtesy and consideration evinced in the explanatory letter of the Under Secretary, dated 11th April 1874, accompanying the new rules, and in the official reply to Mr. De Vere's letter of resignation.

2. While they cannot but remark that the alterations introduced into the new rules all to give them that full control over their officers which they deem desirable in the interests of the asylum, they see, with satisfaction, that some of the changes suggested by them have been carried into effect, and they are ready to admit that in this respect, with one exception, as much deference has been paid to their opinion, as, under the circumstances, they could reasonably expect.

3. They are constrained to express their deep regret and disappointment that the rule relating to rejected tenders has not been rescinded or modified, and to state that the justification of that rule put forward in the explanatory letter is, in their opinion, wholly unsatisfactory.

4. The board, on 3rd May 1862, unanimously remonstrated against it in the following terms (*inter alia*): "The functions of boards of gaol superintendence and boards of guardians are in many respects analogous to those of boards of governors of lunatic asylums, and the Legislature has wisely confided to gaol and poor law boards the selection and appointment of officers, the absolute power of concluding contracts, and, in a word, that free exercise of their powers which prove that the State looks upon men entrusted with local administration as worthy to be trusted, whilst the 'new code' breathes, throughout, a spirit of unwise and derogatory distrust." This has been so keenly felt by a most valued member of our board as to induce his retirement; and Rule 5 (*inter alia*): "Your Committee object in the strongest manner to this rule, which is not to be found in the former code. The Governors are competent to examine tenders for contracts, and to accept or reject them upon their own responsibility."

"This is a duty which they, and they alone, can properly perform, and it is highly derogatory to their character that they should be required to transmit to the inspectors for their examination and approval, the tenders, whether accepted or rejected, which have been opened and signed by the chairman." "Your committee protest strongly against this petty distrust, which has no precedent in the proceedings of boards of guardians, or presentment sessions."

"The acceptance of a tender, and the completion of the contract thereon, ought of course be entered on the minutes, as part of the proceedings of the day."

On the 20th May 1873, they passed a unanimous resolution to this effect (*inter alia*): "The governors point to this regulation as one which fatally affects their independence, and subjects their proceedings to the revision of the inspectors, in a matter which concerns not alone their discretion but their honour." And on the 7th October 1873, they again unanimously declared (*inter alia*): "The governors thank his Excellency for bringing under the notice of the Privy Council the various objections made by them to the existing rules; they can entertain no doubt but that his Excellency, with the advice of the Privy Council, will perceive that some of those rules are unfavourable to the discipline of the institution, and that the rule with respect to rejected tenders is an imputation upon the honour of the Board."

"The governors are most anxious to be placed in a position which, without sacrifice of self-respect, they may be able to continue their exertions for the due care of the helpless lunatic poor." "They believe this also to be the sincere desire of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant."

In 1862, this rule was, as they believe, the chief cause of the resignation of one of the most valued and experienced members of the board, the Honourable Stephen Spring Rice; they have reason to think that it has lately prevented several gentlemen of consideration in the county from accepting seats on the board; its re-enactment has led to the resignation of Sir Vere, and Mr. de Vere, and they fear that if it be persisted in, other governors will follow the example of these gentlemen; as severity against corruption, they consider it unnecessary if not illusory.

5. While they repudiated this rule, because it seems to question their integrity in dealing with contracts, they are of opinion that it is highly desirable that the rejected tenders, as well as other documents relating to the affairs of the asylum, should be preserved as matters of record in the office of the asylum, to be subject to the examination of the inspectors at their pleasure, and to be available as evidence, in the event of a *prima facie* case being established for inquiry into the conduct of the board, or of the officers of the asylum; such is the practice voluntarily adopted in other public institutions, and it is one which seems to afford every guarantee that can practically be required, that the financial business of the institution shall be transacted with honesty.

6. They trust, therefore, that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council will see the propriety of either rescinding the rule *in toto*, or modifying it so that the rejected tenders shall henceforward be dealt with in the manner prescribed in the same rule with reference to receipts.

17 April 1874.

(signed) Thomas Boyse,
Chairman.

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 24 April 1874.

I HAVE duly submitted to his Grace the Duke of Abercorn, the Minute of Proceedings of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, held on the 17th instant.

His Grace regrets that the 6th rule, which directs that all tenders for contracts, whether accepted or rejected, shall be duly forwarded to the office of the Inspectors of Lunatics for examination, still seems to them to question their integrity in dealing with contracts; but he fails to perceive how their alternative scheme of preserving the rejected tenders as matters of record in the office of the asylum, to be subject to the examination of the inspectors at their pleasure, would meet their present objections; for if the governors resent the examination of the tenders by the inspectors as a reflection upon their honour, it appears to his Grace immaterial whether such examination shall take place at the asylum or at the office of the inspectors.

His Grace desires me, in conclusion, to state, that he entirely shares the opinion of the Lords Justices (as conveyed in my letter to Mr. De Vere of the 11th, copy of which was forwarded

forwarded to the Board) that they were unable to understand why a regulation which is felt by the governors of the majority of the district lunatic asylums in Ireland to be unobjectionable, and of which several of the boards of governors have specially expressed their approval, should be looked upon by the Limerick Board as questioning their integrity.

I am directed to forward herewith, for the information of the board, a copy of a further letter received from Mr. De Vere, and my reply thereto.

I am, &c.

(signed) M. E. Hicks Beach.

To the Resident Medical Superintendent of the
District Lunatic Asylum, Limerick.

COPY OF CORRESPONDENCE on the said Subject between the Government and individual Members of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

Sir,

Monroe, Foynes, April 1874.

I REQUEST you will convey to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant my desire that my name shall be removed from the list of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

On the promulgation of a new code of Privy Council Rules in the year 1862, the Limerick Board of Governors, by a unanimous vote, protested against certain regulations therein contained, and suggested amendments.

Their amendments were rejected by the Irish Government.

One of those rules, that, namely, which provided that rejected tenders for contracts accepted by the board should be transmitted to the inspectors for examination and approval, I considered so arbitrary, so unconstitutional, and so derogatory to the governors, that on the rejection of the proposed amendment, I thought it advisable to refrain from active participation in the proceedings of the board.

Towards the close of the year 1872 lunatic disorders, resulting in the loss of human life, having been found to exist in the institution, I thought it my imperative duty to take a part again in the administration of the asylum.

Since that time I have earnestly co-operated with my colleagues in the endeavour to procure from the Government such reforms as are considered essential for the well-being of a great public charity. Our efforts have not been wholly unsuccessful.

On the 21st of May 1873, our board met to consider the final representation to be laid before Government. This board comprised the Mayor, the Most Rev. Bishop Butler, Very Rev. Dean O'Brien, M. R. Ryan, high sheriff, city of Limerick, Edward William O'Brien, Robert Hunt, Henry Mansell, William Spillane, Alderman O'Callaghan, J. C. Delmege, Thomas Boyce, and Stephen de Vere.

The governors unanimously adopted resolutions in which, after cordially recognising the value of certain changes in the administration of the asylum made by the Lord Lieutenant in deference to their representations, they proceeded to state in detail the grievances of which they had to complain.

They expressed their regret that his Excellency had not thought fit to concede their application for a full and independent inquiry.

They stated respectfully to his Excellency the pain they had experienced on receiving his Excellency's communication of 10th April 1873, in which, misled by partial and garbled extracts from official reports, his Excellency had thrown undeserved blame upon the governors for abuses and defects existing in the asylum; they transmitted to his Excellency the entire official reports for 15 years bearing upon the matters in question, with extracts from their minutes, so that his Excellency might judge for himself whether his animadversion was just and deserved. The vindication was complete; but on this point they have received no reply.

Finally, in compliance with the request of the Lord Lieutenant, they reviewed in detail the portions of the Privy Council's rules which they considered most objectionable, and they suggested what they considered to be important amendments.

I shall not refer to those amendments in detail. I shall confine myself to one which the governors looked upon as indispensable.

The Resolution of 21st May 1873 proceeds as follows: 'The Rules of 1862 provided, "that on the acceptance of a contract by the board of governors, the rejected tenders should be forthwith transmitted to the inspectors for their examination and approval. The governors indignantly protested against this provision, but protested in vain. In the code of 1871 the framers have omitted the words "for their approval," probably perceiving, after nine years' consideration, that it is an absurdity to talk of submitting rejected tenders for approval; but the provision that the rejected tenders should be submitted to the inspectors for examination is still retained. The governors again emphatically protest against this order. There is no analogous rule or practice in the case of gaol boards, boards of guardians, grand juries, or presentment sessions. The fact that the funds for lunatic asylums are in the first instance lent by the state, forms no excuse for this derogatory exception; those funds are advanced on ample security, that of a compulsory presentment; they are repaid, and ultimately fall, like gaol and grand jury charges, upon the local ratepayers.

The governors point to this regulation as one which fatally affects their independence; it subjects their proceedings to the revision of the inspectors in a matter which concerns not alone their discretion, but their honour."

Such was the resolution of a body of men conscious of their responsibility, jealous of their honour, and anxious to perform honestly their arduous duty.

After the lapse of 10 months the governors have at last received a decisive answer on this point. This insulting, exceptional, dishonouring provision has been deliberately, and after 10 months' consideration, re-enacted *verbatim* in the revised code, bearing date 23rd February 1874.

Local Boards, to be efficient, must be respected and independent; a centralised despotism, wielded by paid officials, permitted to review the administrative action of a board nominated by the executive which is supposed to represent the character, intelligence, and property of those upon whom it imposes an enormous tax for purposes of charity and humanity, is an anachronism.

If the governors be worthy of trust, let them be trusted; if not, let them be dismissed, and some authority more worthy of trust substituted for them. Let them not be at the same time retained in the semblance of power and discredit.

Who are those who are to decide whether the board of governors have honestly and discreetly exercised the important function of entering into contract? two medical gentlemen living in Dublin (of whom, personally, I wish to speak without disrespect), who, in judging as to contracts, have no local knowledge to guide them, no interest in the economical administration of local funds.

Such a system cannot last; it is false in principle; it is disastrous in practice; when rightly understood it will not long be tolerated by the country.

I feel so strongly the claims which the lunatic poor have upon my services, that I would bear with much if I could tender those services with independence, and without forfeiture of self-respect, but I believe that an administration, apparently but not really free, outwardly responsible and really powerless, must be necessarily weak, inefficient, and useless; and, agreeing cordially with the unanimous vote of the board of governors on the 21st May 1873 which declared that the rule in question "subjects their proceedings to the revision of the inspectors in a matter which concerns not alone their discretion, but their honour," and that it "fatally affects their independence," I will not consent to remain a member of a board whose independence I conceive to be abrogated, and whose honour I conceive to be impugned.

My brother, Sir Vere de Vere, concurs with me in the request that his Excellency will be pleased to remove our names from the list of the governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a pamphlet containing the correspondence between the governors and Her Majesty's Government.

I shall send a copy of this letter to the governors of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum.

The Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Step. E. de Vere.*

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 11 April 1874.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, on the 4th instant, of your letter dated April 1874, requesting that your name and that of your brother, Sir Vere de Vere, be removed from the list of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, and having submitted the same to the Lords Justices, I am directed by their Excellencies to convey to you, and to request that you will communicate to Sir Vere de Vere, that they will be prepared to accept your and his resignation, if, on further consideration, you still wish to press them.

With reference to the reason which you have assigned for your resignation, I am to state that no official communication having been made previously to this day to the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, their Excellencies regret that your resignation was not deferred until the board had received the copies of the new code of regulations, with the explanatory letter which has this day been addressed to them, and of which a copy is herewith transmitted for your information.

Their Excellencies are unable to understand why a regulation which is felt by the governors of the majority of the District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland to be unobjectionable, and of which several of the boards of governors have specially expressed their approval, should be deemed by you to be insulting and dishonouring. The following is an extract of the part relating to this subject, from a report of a committee of the board of governors of the Richmond District Lunatic Asylum, adopted by the board as their answer to the Government Circular transmitting the objections of the Limerick board for the opinions of the other boards.

"We fail in discovering the force of the objection to the rule which requires that on the occasion of the acceptance of contracts by the governors, the rejected tenders should be forthwith transmitted to the inspectors for examination."

"We are of opinion that this course is right and proper, in order to show the reasons which have influenced the governors in selecting contracts not necessarily the lowest in amount

amount, said reasons being generally marked either upon the rejected or accepted tender."

Stephen E. De Vere, Esq.,
Monroe, Foynes.

I have, &c.
(signed) T. H. Burke.

Sir,

Monroe, Foynes, 14 April 1874.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your courteous communication of the 11th instant, which has just reached my hands.

I thank the Lords Justices for their unwillingness to accept my resignation of the office of Governor of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum, and I regret very much that on careful consideration I felt obliged to press that resignation, and also that of my brother, Sir Vere de Vere.

The reasons urged in your letter do not appear to me sufficient, the rule remaining as it is, to justify my brother and myself in withdrawing or postponing the resignation which we have tendered with much reluctance.

Their Excellencies are good enough to say they "regret that my resignation was not deferred until the Board had received the copies of the new code of regulations, with the explanatory letter which has this day been addressed to them."

Their Excellencies will probably hold me excused for having concluded on the 3rd of April that an official communication of the new rules had been already made to the officer in charge of the institution when I saw that by the order of 23rd February the old code had ceased to exist, and that the Asylum had been on and from that day placed exclusively under the authority of the new code.

I am glad to find that the opinion of other boards regarding the rule as to rejected tenders was anything but unanimous; of 21 boards to whom our resolutions were referred, three took no action, 14 expressed approval of the rules of 1870; "either absolutely or subject to some suggested alteration"; four of those expressed approbation of the rule as to rejected tenders, and three other boards expressed opinions unfavourable to that rule.

You have been so good as to furnish me with an extract from the reply of the Richmond District Lunatic Asylum; it contains this passage: "We are of opinion that this course is right and proper in order to show the reasons which have influenced the governors in their selecting contracts, not necessarily the lowest in amount, said reasons being generally marked either upon the accepted or rejected tenders."

You will permit me to observe that this extract conclusively establishes the propriety of the resolution passed by the Limerick Board; there can be no cause for requiring boards to state their reasons for the selection they have made unless this, that their motives are open to suspicion, and that the decision made on their own responsibility is liable to review on the part of the inspectors.

There is no rule of law, nor, as far as I am aware, any practice, which enjoins that the reasons of the board shall be marked upon either the accepted or rejected tenders; it would have given me much pleasure to have seen the terms in which those boards expressed themselves who objected to the rule.

The alterations made in the code of rules in deference to the reiterated representations of the Limerick Board, commencing in 1862, and urged to the present day (though till now ineffectually), are of considerable importance, and may perhaps induce the Government to perceive that it is possible that the carefully considered opinions of an intelligent and independent board may be right even when they are opposed to official influence and routine.

If, in like manner, Her Majesty's Government should ever come to the conclusion that the contract rule is either an empty form or an undue subjection of boards of governors to the inspectors in a matter which concerns their honour, and in which they alone (subject to the law of the land) are responsible; and shall think it expedient either to repeal it, or to modify it, so as to meet the just objection of the governors; in such a case, I shall be happy to resume my place, and to work, as I have attempted, though feebly, to do, for the benefit of the lunatic poor.

Until this be done I shall feel that the services of a man degraded in his own esteem would be worthless, and worse than worthless.

I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to lay this, my reply, before their Excellencies the Lords Justices.

The Under Secretary, Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Step. E. de Vere.*

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 22 April 1874.

I AM directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, and to state that as you still feel it necessary to resign your office as a Governor of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, his Grace regrets that he has no alternative but to accept your resignation and that of Sir Vere de Vere.

With reference to that part of your letter in which you state that it would have given you

you much pleasure to have seen the terms in which those boards expressed themselves who objected to the rule, I am to state that in one case the opinion of the board was simply expressed, "that the transmission of rejected tenders should be abandoned," and in another that the board "do not see that there is any necessity" for rejected tenders being submitted to the inspectors." In a third case the board considered "the Rule No. 8, as explained by a letter especially addressed to this board, dated 5th June 1869, and printed circular, dated 20th September 1869, from the inspectors, as highly objectionable, inasmuch as it places Boards of Governors of Lunatic Asylums in an unworthy and unsuitable position different from any other body of representative cess or rate payers in this country."

The letter and circular thus referred to as explanatory of the rule in question, having been written in 1869, had reference to the rule then in force, requiring tenders to be transmitted for approval, and not to the altered rule of 1870.

In the single case in which a general concurrence in the views of the Limerick Board was expressed, there was no special reference to the rule regarding the transmission of tenders.

With reference to your remark as to the lapse of time between the date of the new rules and the communication to the governors of the Limerick Asylum, I am to observe that it was necessary that the rules should be printed, the proofs revised, and the copies made up before they could be promulgated.

I have, &c.

(signed) T. H. Burke.

Stephen E. de Vere, Esq., J.P.,
Monare, Foynes.

Sir,

Monare, Foynes, 24 April 1874.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 22nd instant, informing me that his Grace the Lord Lieutenant had accepted my resignation, and that of my brother, Sir Vere de Vere, as Governors of Limerick Lunatic Asylum.

I feel much obliged by your courtesy in furnishing me with information as to the terms used by other boards in conveying to the Government their disapprobation of the rule as to tenders. I am glad to find that four boards concurred with the Limerick Board in deprecating the derogatory position in which they are placed by that rule, while unfortunately four other boards have taken a different view of the consideration due to their position.

You seem to be of opinion that the very strong and just remarks made against the rule by our board do not apply to the rule as altered in 1870, and now republished; but you will observe that the argument of that board applies as much to the rules of 1870 and 1874 as to those of 1862. The words "for approval," have been no doubt struck out from the rule, but the rejected tenders being still directed to be sent up for examination, it is reasonable to conclude that the inspectors when examining are invested with the duty of forming a favourable or unfavourable opinion as to the conduct of the board; and if unfavourable, exercising some authority or sanction in the matter.

With regard to the reasons stated in the last paragraph of your letter for the delay which occurred between the revocation of the old rules and the communication of the new, I beg to observe that it was no part of my intention to bring against the Government any charge for unnecessary delay. You, by order of their Excellencies the Lords Justices, in your letter of 11th April, threw very distinct blame upon me for not having deferred my resignation until after the new rules had been officially communicated. In my reply, I justified myself by observing that the existing code for the government of lunatic asylums having been repealed on the 23rd February, and a new code then enacted, I had every reason to conclude on the 3rd of April that the new code had been officially communicated to the officer in charge, and that a long inter-regnum had not been permitted to exist during which the old code had ceased to bind, and governors and superintendents were left in ignorance of the new code under whose authority they had to act. I only have to remark that my intention was to defend myself, not to attack others.

I have, &c.

(signed) Step. E. de Vere.

The Under Secretary, Dublin Castle.

Sir,

Croome House, Croom, County Limerick,
11 May 1874.

I beg you will convey to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant my desire to retire from the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum Board.

I feel that the decision of his Excellency to retain that part of the Privy Council rules, No. 8, to which our Board has so often and strongly objected, leaves me no other alternative.

The Board suggested a compromise, which, while protecting their independence, would have fulfilled any object there might have been in the rule, and it has been refused.

The determination of the Government to insist upon this offensive rule, and one which, at the same time, is wholly inoperative for any useful practical purpose in face of our repeated

peated protests, I can but consider as a direct imputation upon the honour and integrity of the board to which I, as one of the representatives of this county upon it, decline to submit to.

To the Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Henry Lyons.*

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 21 May 1874.

I AM directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 11th instant, and to inform you that his Grace accepts your resignation of your appointment as a governor of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

Henry Lyons, Esq.,
Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace,
Croom House, Croom.

I am &c.
(signed) *T. H. Burke.*

Sir,

Cahinmoyle, Newcastle West, County Limerick,
12 May 1874.

THE governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, in their Resolutions of the 17th April 1874, while remonstrating against Rule VIII. (which requires rejected tenders to be sent to the inspectors for their examination), suggested an arrangement which seemed to them to afford every guarantee that could reasonably be required for the prevention of objectionable practice in the taking of contracts. They proposed that the rejected tenders should be preserved in the office of the asylum where they would be subject to the examination of the inspectors at their pleasure. It appears obvious that if this course were adopted, and if the amounts of the tenders and names of the parties tendering were entered on the minutes, jobbery, or mistakes on the part of the governors, could scarcely escape detection.

This proposal was made by the governors not by way of compromise (for I believe they would any time have cheerfully accepted such an amendment of the rule), but for the purpose of proving their desire to meet the view of the Government.

The letter of the Chief Secretary, dated 24th April, conveys to the board the decision of his Grace the Lord Lieutenant not to rescind or modify the rule: a decision learned with regret, and, I may add, with surprise by the governors generally, and by no one more than myself.

Had I known of the existence and import of the rule when I was offered a seat on the board I should unhesitatingly have declined that honour. As it was, as soon as I was made aware of it I publicly protested against it; and since that time I have always publicly declined to take part in the proceedings of the board when contracts were being considered. I should at once have tendered my resignation, but that events that had recently occurred made it evident that the Privy Council Rules must undergo an early revision, and I could not believe that rules so useless, so invidious, and so deeply resented, would be deliberately re-enacted. I took part in the remonstrances made from time to time by the board on the subject, and I was the proposer of the resolutions of the 17th April.

Under these circumstances I feel that no course is open to me but to resign my office, and I have to request accordingly that you will communicate to his Grace the Lord Lieutenant my desire that my name may be removed from the list of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

I cannot close my connection with the asylum without making some reference to the correspondence which has taken place between our board and the Government on the subject of this rule, and in particular to the letter of the Chief Secretary in which the final resolve of the Government is announced.

No attempt is made in that letter to show that Rule VIII. has any advantage in point of practical utility over the modification of it proposed by the board. Not only so, but neither in that nor in any other communication from the Government is the retention of that rule defended on any ground whatever, save that it exists, and has not been objected to by a majority of the boards of governors in Ireland.

Could it be proved to give any security for the proper administration of public money that is not equally given by the amendment proposed by the board, I for one should readily submit to it. No public body is entirely exempt from the temptation to jobbery, and the public have a right to claim a power of investigating the action of the boards of governors through their minutes and records, which in every case should afford ample means for judging of their conduct. But, as I have said, it is not on such grounds that the rule is defended, and a suspicion forces itself on the mind that this rule, drawn by Dr. Nugent, as part of an elaborate scheme for transferring to the inspectors a large portion of the authority formerly lodged in the board of governors, and passed (perhaps without due consideration) mainly through his influence, has been twice re-enacted in the teeth of the earnest remonstrances of our board, because the Government for the time being wanted the candour to retreat from a false position.

His Grace the Lord Lieutenant intimates that he is unable to enter into the feelings of the governors with respect to Rule VIII. It is not necessary that he should do so, it is

enough that he should recognise the existence of those feelings. The governors must be the judges of their own honour; and, however great their respect for his Grace's high office they cannot in deference to his opinion acquiesce in a rule which they have declared to contain an imputation upon that honour. To his Grace indeed it may "appear to be immaterial whether the examination (of the tenders) shall take place at the asylum or in the office of the inspectors," but the governors have distinctly stated that they do not so regard it; and their conduct must be determined by their own sense of self-respect, not by his Grace's estimate of the amount of indignity which they may be expected to endure.

It would seem that his Grace himself looks upon this point as immaterial; if so, why reject the amendments of the board? But if there be a reasonable justification of the rule, why not put it forward? why appeal not to the good sense of the board, but to the authority of Government? Surely, even the prejudices of the governors, if prejudices they be, are entitled to respectful treatment. The governors are gentlemen selected by the Lord Lieutenant, presumably for their fitness for the post. They give their services gratuitously to the Institution, often at serious personal inconvenience. They are the representatives of the ratepayers, and are eminently amenable to the check of public opinion. The funds which they administer are drawn entirely from local taxation, and form one of the largest items of local expenditure; in this country, probably, about one-fifth of the whole grand jury

cess.

But the feelings of the governors on this point are not mere prejudices. There is a material distinction between Rule VIII., as it stands, and the proposed amendment.

In the first place Rule VIII. is, as the governors believe, without precedent in the case of other public bodies in Ireland, and it places governors of lunatic asylums in a humiliating position as compared with members of other boards; while the rule as amended is one which has been voluntarily adopted by several local public bodies, and is felt to involve no slur upon their character.

Again, Rule VIII. implies that the attitude of the Government towards boards of governors is, and ought to be, one of permanent suspicion; on each occasion on which contracts are taken the inspectors are to examine the rejected tenders, in other words they are to satisfy themselves that the governors have not corruptly rejected any tender. What is this but to assume that the governors are not unlikely to have been guilty of corrupt practices. The prevention of mistakes cannot be the end of the rule, for in such a matter as the taking of tenders it is scarcely possible that mistakes should occur; such an attitude may, for aught I know, be adopted with propriety towards paid subordinates; but the governors are not paid subordinates; they are independent gentlemen, supposed (perhaps erroneously) to be invested with the control of a great public charity, as magistrates, grand jurors, members of the corporation, &c.; they are accustomed to exercise a certain amount of independent authority, and to receive from the Government that consideration which is due to those to whom important public functions are committed. It is natural and right that they should deeply resent an imputation as unworthy as it is unjust. The amendment proposed by the board conveys no such imputation. It recognises indeed the liability of boards of governors to err, and provides adequate means for the exposure of fraud or favoritism, but it does not presume their action in respect of contracts to be such as to require habitual supervision. Unlike Rule VIII., it contains no implied direction to the inspectors to examine rejected tenders; and, therefore, it would leave it to those gentlemen to decide, at their own discretion, under what circumstances they would take upon themselves the invidious office of calling boards of governors to an account of their proceedings, in taking contracts.

Besides, the governors cannot but be sensible that it makes a difference in the estimation in which their office will be held, whether the tenders are kept at the asylum in the custody of their own clerk, or are sent for examination to the office of an extraneous body, the inspectors, who possess an authority not superior to if even co-ordinate with that of the boards of governors. The financial affairs of the asylum are peculiarly the province of the governors; if they are not to be trusted in them, so long as no *prima facie* cause to doubt their honesty arises, it is difficult to see for what purpose they are appointed. They raise no objection to the periodical audit of their accounts by the Government auditors, because the audit plainly subserves an useful end. It corrects the mistakes into which public bodies, from ignorance of the law or other causes are liable to fall; it furnishes a general review of the financial situation; sometimes it supplies the text for valuable suggestions emanating from a highly experienced official. But the examination of the rejected tenders by the inspectors is simply a questioning of the integrity of the governors, it is the symbol of suspicion, and for the governors publicly to acquiesce in it by sending the tenders to the office of the inspectors would be to compromise not alone their personal position, but the honour and independence of those whom they represent, and whose confidence they venture to think that they enjoy.

Finally, Rule VIII. embodies in the plainest form the spirit of centralisation that pervaded the code of 1862, and is to be found even in the code enacted last February; and I believe I may say that the objections to it entertained by the Governors are in great measure objections to the system of which it is the type. That system they hold to be unsound in theory and mischievous in practice. I need not dwell on this subject, for the governors have on various occasions urged their views on it in documents which are in the hands of Government, and which have been made public through the press; and the public have it in their power to judge whether or not the board has been justified in the prolonged and consistent opposition which it has offered to the innovations introduced in 1862. I will add his only to the arguments of the board, that my experience as a working governor has brought

brought home vividly to my mind the enormous practical inconvenience of the system of centralisation under which lunatic asylums are conducted. So minute and vexatious is the interference with the freedom of action of the governors, so constant are the necessary references to Dublin, and so distant the period at which replies are received, that it is a matter of very great difficulty and delay to carry out the most trifling change, even in cases when the views of the board and the inspectors entirely agree. Such a result would be ludicrous if it were not most prejudicial to the interests of the institution, as well as to the temper of all concerned in its management. It furnishes a practical refutation of the plausible assertion often made in favour of a centralised government, namely, that it works with an ease, a speed, and a regularity unattainable under forms of government which allow more scope to the action of local authorities.

His Grace and the Lords Justices attach so much importance to the fact that the Limerick board has not been supported by most of the other Irish boards, that they have not thought it necessary to justify the re-enactment of Rule VIII. by any other argument. I must confess that I cannot perceive the overwhelming cogency of this solitary reason; I should extend this letter beyond all proper limits were I to attempt to explain why the silence of some other boards ought not to be taken to imply consent; any one who is familiar with the working of boards will understand the difficulty of obtaining from such bodies an expression of opinion on questions which do not form part of their regular business, which are probably new to most of the members, which would require careful and prolonged consideration, and which convey an implied censure on them for not having taken earlier action. But I must observe that circumstances have in a peculiar manner forced on the attention of the Limerick governors the unsound and invidious character of the existing system. In 1872 they became aware (through the able and persistent investigations of some of their number) that abuses of the gravest nature, culminating in a terrible tragedy, had been going on for years under the eyes of the inspectors; whether those abuses were or were not known to the inspectors is immaterial; in either case their existence demonstrate the unsoundness of the system under which they were possible. When the governors had detected and exposed those abuses, when they had used every means in their power to provide a remedy for them, and to prevent their recurrence, they were taxed with neglect of duty, and an attempt was made to exonerate the inspectors at their expense, and to hold them responsible for the inefficient manner in which the duty of inspection had been performed. Could anything be more invidious? I am satisfied that Lord Spencer, then Lord Lieutenant, is incapable of committing an act of wilful injustice, and I am aware of the interest he took in the case, and the anxious attention he devoted to it, but so perplexed is the constitution under which lunatic asylums in Ireland are managed, that it is not surprising that he was led to pronounce a censure upon the board instead of upon those with whom the responsibility really rested. That censure was grounded upon official reports made to his Excellency by the inspectors. The governors in their reply proved that these official reports were partial, garbled, and incorrect. Such being their painful experience, it is not unnatural that the Limerick board should be more keenly sensible than other more fortunate boards of the evils of a régime of divided authority and doubtful responsibility.

But, granting that the majority of other boards do not concur in the views of the Limerick board, does not the past history of that board warrant the governors in standing firmly by their opinion, even when in a position of comparative isolation, without exposing themselves to the charge of presumption.

On the introduction of the code of 1862 they offered to the Government various suggestions regarding it. They did not, unfortunately, on that occasion enjoy the support of other Irish boards; and their suggestions were curtly rejected, yet on the revision of the Privy Council Rules in 1871, some of those suggestions were adopted, and again a certain number of others were introduced into the revised code recently promulgated. It is not to be supposed that this was done out of deference to the board, but because the necessity or the value of the suggested change had been proved by experience. This being so, I am not without hopes that in respect of Rule VIII, also the justice of their demand will ultimately be recognised, and that that obnoxious rule will be rescinded or modified. When the resignation of some gentlemen and the refusal of others to accept seats at the board shall have convinced the Government that the objections entertained to it by the gentlemen, indeed, I might say by the public of the county and city of Limerick, though possibly fanciful, are deeply rooted, and deserve to be met, if not by concession, at least by arguments more specious than any that have hitherto been adduced in its favour.

I regret the length of this letter, but I have felt it due to myself to state clearly my objections to the rule, the re-enactment of which has compelled me to resign, and to the system of which it is the expression, and I have the less hesitation in doing so, because as frequent occasions from 1862 down to the present time, the board has strongly, and without a single dissentient voice, expressed opinions that are in substantial accordance with mine.

I shall send a copy of this letter to the chairman of the board of governors.

I have, &c.

To the Under Secretary, Dublin Castle.

(signed) Edward Wm. O'Brien.

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 18 May 1874.

I am to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, and to acquaint you that I will submit it to his Grace the Lord Lieutenant.

Edward Wm. O'Brien, Esq.,
Cahirmoyle, Newcastle West.

I am, &c.
(signed) *T. R. Burke.*

Sir,

Shannon Lawn, Limerick, 18 May 1874.

I HAVE to request that you will convey to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant my desire to have my name removed from the list of governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum.

I would willingly make any sacrifice in the interest of our lunatic poor, were it unattended by loss of honour and independence, but as it now appears to be the fixed determination of the Irish Government to keep governors of lunatic asylums merely to act as clerks to the inspectors, I must decline the honour of again sitting at the board in any such capacity.

If the Executive in this country think fit to transfer the absolute control of those important institutions into the hands of the inspectors, and of the resident medical superintendent, let it at once boldly say so, but then let it not be astonished when honourable men object to have their decisions in monetary affairs subjected to the examination of medical inspectors, or of their subordinates, since the Privy Council Rules do not define which official is to discharge this duty.

It is a matter solely for the Executive to consider whether the inspectors might not be much more usefully employed in inquiring how all the patients in those establishments are treated while living, and into the causes of the death of each one amongst them, rather than in examining what every paltry article has cost or who supplied it.

The recent revelations in the Limerick Asylum have clearly proved how the present system has been working for years, and how the duty of inspection has been discharged. It must ever prove a source of consolation to the governors of the Limerick Asylum to feel that, despite powerful and persistent opposition, they succeeded in bringing to light a cruel homicide, which official visits of inspection, five times repeated in 10 months, had failed to discover; but they now deeply regret to find that a system which, bordering on despotism, has yielded such fruit in the past, has been approved of by his Excellency for the future.

I beg to state that I am sending a copy of this letter to the Limerick Board of Governors.

To the Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *W. Spillane.*

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 20 May 1874.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, and to inform you that I will submit it to his Grace the Lord Lieutenant.

W. Spillane, Esq.,
Shannon Lawn, Limerick.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. R. Burke.*

COPY of CORRESPONDENCE on the same Subject between the Governors of other District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, and the Irish Government.

CIRCULAR to the Boards of Governors of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Dublin Castle, 10 September 1873.

I AM directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acquaint you that the governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum have represented to his Excellency that the code of rules and regulations for the management of district lunatic asylums in Ireland, made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland, in 1870, "still contain provisions which they consider extremely objectionable, and which are not in harmony with the independence of a body administering local not Imperial funds."

His Excellency has directed that the governors be informed in reply that he had carefully considered their views, and did not think it desirable, without fuller inquiries, to alter the rules of 1870, but that he would bring under the notice of the Privy Council the various objections made by the governors to these rules, and would suggest that they should be referred to a committee who could inquire into the matter, and would, no doubt, be ready to give a personal hearing to any of the governors who wished to urge their objections.

I transmit

"I transmit herewith an Extract from the letter of the governors, containing the several objections urged by them to the rules, and I am to state that His Excellency will be glad to be favoured with your views on the subject.

To the Board of
Governors, District Lunatic Asylum.

I have, &c.
(signed) T. H. Burke.

EXTRACT from the LETTER of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District
Lunatic Asylum.

"THE code of 1843, in defining the duties of the resident medical superintendent declared that he shall exercise his functions "under the direction of the Board." These important words were omitted from the code of 1862, and the governors asked in vain that they should be reinstated. They are not in the rules of 1871. A similar omission may be remarked in the rules of 1862 and 1871, defining the functions of the clerk, but the omission has been rectified in that case by the Act of Parliament, which gives the governors the power of dismissing him. The governors have no power of dismissing or punishing the resident superintendent.

The codes of 1862 and 1871 have omitted the useful provision in the code of 1843, which enjoined two half-yearly general meetings for a general examination into the affairs of the establishment, and the revision of the accounts.

The rules of 1862 provided that on the acceptance of a contract by the Board of Governors the rejected tenders should be forthwith transmitted to the inspectors for their examination and approval. The governors indignantly protested against this provision, but protested in vain. In the code of 1871, the framers have omitted the words "for their approval," probably perceiving, after nine years' consideration, that it is an absurdity to talk of submitting a rejected tender for approval; but the provision that the rejected tenders shall be submitted to the inspectors for examination is still retained. The governors again emphatically protest against this order. There is no analogous rule or practice in the case of gaol boards, boards of guardians, grand juries, or presentment sessions. The fact that the funds for lunatic asylums are in the first instance lent by the State forms no excuse for this derogatory exception. Those funds are advanced on ample security, that of a compulsory presentment. They are repaid, and ultimately fall like gaol and grand jury charges upon the local ratepayers.

The governors point to this regulation as one which fatally effects their independence. It subjects their proceedings to the revision of the inspectors in a matter which concerns not alone their discretion but their honour.

The code of 1843, when defining the duties of a manager (now resident medical superintendent), required that in addition to his daily general and personal inspection, he should be present at the meals of the inmates. This provision insured his presence in the asylum at three several times during the day. It was omitted in the rules of 1862, and that omission was persisted in despite the protest of the governors. It is again omitted in the code of 1871. This rule must be read in connection with the 34th rule, which regulates the superintendent's leave of absence, declaring that "he shall never be absent from the asylum at the same time with the matron, nor ever for the night without special leave from a board of governors or the inspectors, and upon every such absence he shall enter in a book the date and period, and inform the consulting physician, who, for the time, shall exercise a general supervision over the establishment." The prescribed daily inspection may be made at any time in the forenoon; and the governors submit that, by the careful consideration of Rules 30 and 34, it will appear that the resident superintendent has it in his power, as stated in the board's remonstrance of 1862, "to absent himself, without leave, from an early hour in the morning to a late hour at night, without the positive neglect of any prescribed duty." Further, as the superintendent is permitted by the 34th rule to absent himself at night on the permission of the inspectors, he possesses, in point of fact, the power of being absent for the whole of every day, and for nights on permission of the inspectors, without breach of the regulations, or accountability to the board. The governors have proved that by the regulations now in force, and the alterations in the code of 1843, the medical superintendent is placed in a position virtually independent of the board of governors. But let us now inquire what is the provision made for the performance of his duty during his absence. When he is away the "matron must be present." Is she an adequate substitute for the superintendent in an institution containing 217 male and 203 female lunatics? He must, it is true, inform the visiting physician of his absence, who "for the time shall exercise a general supervision;" but the visiting physician is not by this rule compelled to transfer his residence to the lunatic asylum during the superintendent's absence. No physician in large practice would or could engage to do so. The result is this, that constantly during the day, and frequently during the night, the asylum may be left without efficient control, and the governors are powerless to interfere or to punish, because the rules are definite and precise, and have not been infringed.

The 16th rule (new code) gives to the superintendent most properly a power to admit patients provisionally in cases of urgency. The governors in 1862 proposed to supplement this provision by one enabling any three governors, in a case of urgency, to order the admission of a patient duly certified, and for whom papers of application had been duly filled.

This power, which the governors consider to be of importance, was refused. By the first part of the rule the inspectors are invested with full power to order the admission of a patient, even though the case should not be of urgency.

The 110th rule (new code) provides that misunderstandings between the "officers, attendants, or servants" attached to an asylum shall be referred to the inspectors. The governors submit that this regulation is subversive of their due authority over their servants and officers, and is inconsistent with the spirit of the 30th and 31st Vict. c. 118.

The governors have already refused to Rule 1, and to the interpretation placed upon it. If that interpretation be correct—if it imposes a statutory obligation upon the governors—if, because they do not on all occasions comply with it, they are justly chargeable with "disobedience," the governors submit that it is a regulation derogatory to their position—impossible of strict observance—illusory if observed.

The harmonious working of all public or private institutions depends upon the due subordination of departmental functions. In lunatic asylums the duty of inspection is assigned to certain officers paid by the State; the inspectors of lunatic asylums. Upon them, and not upon the Board of Governors, must rest the responsibility if that duty be not efficiently performed. The governors are ready and willing to exercise, all times reasonably within their power, a faithful supervision of the asylum; and they admit that in so doing they fulfil a moral duty, though not one to which they are bound under the penalties of disobedience to legislative enactment; but it must be remembered that the board is a shifting body; in ten years' time not one single member now on the board may continue on it; it is unreasonable to suppose that a new board will be thoroughly cognizant of the orders given by their predecessors, or how those orders have been carried out. It is essentially the office of the inspectors to examine into the state of the institution, to detect abuses, to suggest remedies, and to see that they are duly applied. The governors therefore submit that if the interpretation which seems to have been affixed to Rule No. 1 be correct, that rule is wrong, and ought to be repealed.

The governors see strong reason for objecting to clauses in Rule 26 (new code) now, they believe, for the first time introduced, which provide that paying patients "shall not be admitted into any asylum without the previous sanction of the inspectors, or one of them;" and that "in special cases the inspectors of lunatics may authorise such an alteration in the charge as they think proper, not less in any case than one-fourth the average cost." The determination of such matters appears to the governors to come solely within the scope of their discretion.

If, in this case, as in the case of rejected tenders already adverted to, the honesty and good sense of the governors cannot be trusted, the principle of centralized administration had better be fully carried out, and the management of the institution entrusted in name as well as in reality to the State.

Carlow District Lunatic Asylum,
15 September 1873.

Sir,

I AM instructed by the Board of Governors of this institution to acknowledge the receipt of your circular of the 10th instant, having reference to changes suggested to be made in the Privy Council Rules now in force for the management of lunatic asylums in Ireland, by the Board of Governors of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum.

The Board took no action on the communication of the Limerick Board of Governors to his Excellency but directed it to be entered on the minutes as "read."

I have, &c.
(signed) *M. Howlett*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

The Under Secretary.

District Asylum, Kilkenny,
17 September 1873.

Sir,

At the meeting of the Board of Governors held on Tuesday, the 16th instant, the following minute was made:—

"Circular from T. H. Burke, Esq., Under Secretary of State, forwarding an extract from the letter of the Governors of Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, containing the several objections urged by them to the Privy Council Rules, and stating that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant will be glad to be favoured with the views of the governors of this asylum on the subject."

Read. Resolved, and passed unanimously—

"That every thing having been carried out most satisfactorily in this asylum under the existing Privy Council Rules of 1870, the Board of Governors do not consider any alteration necessary or desirable with the exception that their recommendations, passed unanimously on two occasions with regard to an increase of salary to the resident medical superintendent, have not been sanctioned owing to the 28th Privy Council Rule."

If this rule be altered the Board would deem it very satisfactory.

T. H. Burke, Esq.,
Under Secretary of State,
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Barry Delany*, M.D.
Resident Medical Superintendent.

District Lunatic Asylum, Enniscorthy,
19 September 1873.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Board of Governors of this asylum to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 10th instant, and in reply to state, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that they have had no cause for disapproving practically of the Privy Council Rules of 1870.

I have, &c.

The Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

(signed) *Thos. Hildrye Shiell*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

District Lunatic Asylum, Cork,
7 October 1873.

Sir,

IN reply to your circular of the 10th September 1873, requesting to be informed of the views of the governors of this asylum on the Code of Rules and Regulations for the Management of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland in 1870, I am directed to state, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that the governors consider the present rules work satisfactorily in this asylum.

I am, &c.

(signed) *James Hermes, M.D.*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

Thos. H. Burke, Esq.,
Under Secretary of State,
Castle, Dublin.

Waterford District Lunatic Asylum,
8 October 1873.

Sir,

I AM directed by the governors of this asylum to state, for the information of his Excellency, and in reply to your Circular of 10th September, with reference to the Code of Rules and Regulations for the Management of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, 1870, that the subject having been considered by the Board this day, the following Resolution was unanimously agreed to.

"We do not wish to recommend any change of rules, having by experience found them to work well."

I have, &c.

(signed) *R. V. Fletcher*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

T. H. Burke, Esq.,
Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle,

Lunatic Asylum, Castlebar,
8 October 1873.

Sir,

I NOW leave to state, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that at a meeting of the Board of Governors held on Saturday the 4th instant, I submitted for their consideration the Circular, No. 12,035, bearing date 10th September 1873, and the accompanying extract from the letter of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum. The document was marked "Read," and signed by the Chairman of the Board.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Joseph Edmundson, M.D.*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

T. H. Burke, Esq.,
&c. &c. &c.

District Lunatic Asylum, Omagh,
9 October 1873.

Sir,

REFERRING to your communication of the 10th September ult., and to the "Extract from the letter of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum," the Board of Governors of the Omagh District Asylum, on consideration of the changes and modifications recommended by the Limerick Board, consider their recommendation with reference to Rule 26 (new code) sound, and would wish to have it adopted. Also with reference to Rule VIII., they approve of both accepted and rejected tenders being sent to the inspectors, but recommend that the accepted tenders should be returned sooner, as great inconvenience has been experienced from the delay that frequently occurs.

The tenders accepted last month have not yet been returned, which might have caused considerable loss to this Asylum.

The Board do not at present see any reason to make further alteration in the existing rules.

I am, &c.

To the Under Secretary, the Castle,
Dublin.

(signed) *Claud Hamilton*, Chairman.

District Lunatic Asylum, Sligo,
10 October 1873.

Sir,

In reference to your Circular of the 10th ult., addressed to the Board of Governors of this Institution, relative to the "Code of Rules and Regulations for the Management of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland," I have the honour to state that a special meeting was convened on the 8th instant for the purpose of considering it, and am directed to forward the annexed, being the views of the Governors thereon, which you stated "His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant would be glad to be favoured with."

To the Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

I am, &c.
(signed) *John M'Mann*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

8 October 1873.

"THE Governors having carefully considered the Circular addressed to them, are of opinion that, with regard to the duties of medical superintendent, any change is quite unnecessary."

"We approve of the transmission of the rejected tenders to the inspectors."

(signed) *Edward H. Cooper*, Chairman.

Donegal District Lunatic Asylum, Letterkeeny,
11 October 1873.

Sir,

In answer to your letter of the 10th September, I am directed by the Board of Governors of this Asylum, and at which the following members attended:—

Sir James Stewart, Bart., in the Chair.

Lord George Hill.
Francis Mansfield, Esq.
Major Montgomery.
Captain Patterson.

John R. Boyd, Esq.
Rev. Robert M'Morris.
John Sproule, Esq.
William Wray, Esq.

That in accordance with the desire of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, they took into consideration the objection of the Limerick Board of Governors against the code of rules framed by his Excellency in Council in 1870.

And that they have resolved unanimously there was no cause of complaint against the rules, which they considered had been working satisfactorily.

I am, &c.
T. H. Burke, Esq., (signed) *A. Stewart Merrick*, M.D.,
Under Secretary for Ireland, Dublin Castle. Resident Medical Superintendent.

Sir,

The Asylum, Londonderry, 11 October 1873.

In reply to your Circular to the Boards of Governors of Lunatic Asylums, dated 10th ult., which was taken into consideration by the Board of this Asylum at their meeting on the 9th inst., Sir H. Hervey Bruce, Bart., M.P., in the chair, I beg to say that the Board passed the following resolution:—

That the Medical Superintendent be instructed to acknowledge the Circular of 10th September (12,035), and to say that we approve of the rules of 1870.

The Board also desired me to state, in replying to your Circular, that they meant that the above concise resolution should be interpreted to convey their unanimous opinion that they were not conscious of being placed by the present regulation in any false or derogatory position; that there was no allegation against their own honesty or good sense implied in the system at present in force regarding the tenders, with which system they were perfectly satisfied; and that they were at a loss to comprehend the meaning of the complaints and objections of the Limerick Board of Governors.

They further expressed their opinion that they had always been treated with every courtesy and deference by the Commissioners of Asylums and Government Asylum Department.

I am, &c.
The Under Secretary, the Castle, (signed) *Isaac Ashe*, M.D., F.R.C.S.,
Dublin. Resident Medical Superintendent.

Mullingar District Lunatic Asylum,
13 October 1873.

Sir,
I AM directed by the Board of Governors of this Asylum to forward to you, as directed by your Circular of the 10th ultimo, for the consideration of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, resolutions passed by them at their Board meeting held on the 9th instant, in reference to objections raised by the Governors of the Limerick Asylum to some rules of the Privy Council Code.

The Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Henry Berkeley,*
Resident Medical Superintendent.

Mullingar District Lunatic Asylum,
9 October 1873.

REMARKS upon the Circular of 10th September, and the extract from Limerick enclosed.
"The Board thinks,"

"That the transmission of rejected tenders should be abandoned."

(signed) *W. B. Sneyth,* Chairman.

Richmond District Lunatic Asylum, Dublin,
15 October 1873.

Sir,
I AM directed by the Governors of this Asylum to transmit to you, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the accompanying document, containing their views on the statement of the Governors of the Limerick Asylum, respecting the Privy Council rules as forwarded to them with your letter of the 10th ultimo.

The Under Secretary,
&c. &c. &c.,
Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *John Nunn,* Secretary.

EXTRACT from Document referred to in preceding Letter.

We fail in discovering the force of the objection to the rule which requires that, on the occasion of the acceptance of contracts by the Governors "the rejected tenders should be forthwith transmitted to the inspectors for examination." We are of opinion that this course is right and proper in order to show the reasons which have influenced the Governors in their selection of contracts not necessarily the lowest in amount; said reasons being generally marked either upon the rejected or accepted tender.

(signed) *George Hadson, Bart.*
R. F. Ellis.

2 October 1873.

District Asylum, Ballinasloe,
28 October 1873.

Sir,
I HAVE been directed by the Board of Governors of the District Asylum, Ballinasloe to, transmit to you, for the information of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the Minute passed at their adjourned meeting on Monday last, October the 27th instant, referring to an extract from a letter of the Board of Governors of the Limerick Asylum, forwarded to them for their opinion thereon, and in accordance with His Excellency's request, giving him their views on the subject.

T. H. Burke, Esq.,
Chief Secretary's Office,
Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Richard Eaton, M.D.,*
Resident Medical Superintendent.

A letter was read before the Board transmitting an extract from a letter addressed to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, by the Board of Governors of the Limerick Asylum, and requesting the Board's views on the subject, the following Minute was made:—

The Board have had under consideration the letter of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, and the accompanying extract from letter of the Limerick Board; with reference to the rules objected to, they do not see that there is any necessity for rejected tenders being submitted to the inspectors, and they are of opinion that the Governors are the best judges of the amount to be charged in each case for paid patients. With reference to the other parts of the extract letter this Board does not feel called upon to suggest any further change.

Governors Present:

Major John Darcy, Chairman.
John J. O'Shaughnessy, Esq., J.P.
Charles Filgate, Esq., J.P.

Andrew M. Comyn, Esq., J.P.
Rev J. W. Whigham, Esq., J.P.
Michael J. Chievers, Esq., J.P.

PAPERS RELATING TO

Belfast District Hospital for the Insane,
3 November 1873.

Sir,

At a specially summoned monthly meeting of the Board of Governors of this institution, held this day, to receive the report of the Committee appointed on the 6th ultimo, in reference to an extract from a letter of the Governors of the Limerick District Asylum, objecting to certain of the Privy Council rules for the management of these institutions, I have been directed to state, for the information of the Lord Lieutenant, that the Board adopted their Committee's report as follows, viz.:—

"Your Committee having fully considered the objections taken by the Governors of the Limerick Asylum, and after carefully examining the several rules and regulations of 1870, and compared the several allegations made by the objectors to some of those rules, are of opinion, in general terms, that the objections taken are not of that importance which would warrant any change, inasmuch as the Board have found these rules have worked satisfactorily, and with beneficial results."

I am, &c.

To the Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

(signed) *Robert Stewart, M.D.,*
Resident Physician.

County Down Asylum, Downpatrick,
3 November 1873.

Sir,

At a meeting of the Board of Governors, held on Saturday the 2nd instant,—Present, Colonel Forde, M.P., in the chair, William Johnston, Esq., M.P., James S. Crawford, Esq., Major Crawford, Major Nugent, Colonel Craig, Robert Gordon, Esq., Robert Heron, Esq., Thomas Gracey, Esq., the Lord Bishop of Down, and William N. Wallace, Esq.,—I was directed to forward you the enclosed resolution of the Governors with respect to the several objections of the Limerick Board of Governors to the Privy Council rules, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant.

I am, &c.

(signed) *G. J. G. Flynn,*
Resident Medical Superintendent.

T. H. Burke, Esq., Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

"In pursuance of the Minute of the last Board, proceeded to take into consideration a letter received from the Lord Lieutenant, and the suggestions of the Limerick Board of Governors therein enclosed, having given these suggestions a most careful consideration, we come to the conclusion that those contained in the first eight clauses are unnecessary, as we consider the present rules to be quite sufficient for the good government of the institution in these particulars."

(signed) *William B. Forde, Chairman.*

Monaghan District Lunatic Asylum.

At a meeting of the Board of Governors of the Monaghan District Lunatic Asylum, on Thursday, the 18th day of November 1873, specially convened for the purpose of considering a letter from the Under Secretary, dated 10th day of September 1873, desiring, for information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the views of this Board upon an "Extract from the letter of the Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum."

Present in the Chair: James Hamilton, Esq., J.P.

Other Governors Present: Lieut. Col. Jesse Lloyd, J.P.
Captain Thomas Coote, D.L.
W. F. De Visser Kane, Esq., J.P.
And Martin N. Hall, Esq., J.P.

"The Board of Governors of this Asylum, without passing any positive opinion upon the rules on which alterations are proposed, unanimously agree in considering that Rule No. 8, as explained by letter especially addressed to this Board, dated 5th June 1869, and printed circular dated 20th September 1869, from the inspectors, is highly objectionable, inasmuch as it places Boards of Governors of Lunatic Asylums in an unworthy and unsuitable position, different from any other body of representative cess or rate payers in this country."

"James Hamilton, Chairman."

16 November 1873.

John C. Robertson,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

Sir,

I beg to enclose a resolution of the Governors of this Asylum, passed at their meeting on 12th instant, in reference to an "Extract" from the letter of Board of Limerick Asylum, in their remarks on Rules for Government of Asylums, and required by your communication of 13th November 1873.

Maryborough District Asylum,
15 November 1873.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Joseph H. Hatchell,*
Resident Medical Superintendent,

T. H. Burke, Esq., Under Secretary,
Dublin Castle.

Maryborough District Asylum, Board of,
12 November 1873.

Proposed by *R. G. Cosby, Esq.*, seconded by *E. G. Dease, Esq., M.P.*

THE Board of Governors of Maryborough District Lunatic Asylum have under their consideration the "extract from the letter of the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Asylum," forwarded by order of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant for their opinion on the subject therein referred to, desire to make the following observations.

It is not their intention to enter into the several matters of detail alluded to in "the extract," or to express an opinion on each several subject, but they desire to express their general concurrence with the opinions of the Limerick Board, more particularly with that portion of the extract which relates to the resident medical superintendent and the inspectors of lunatic asylums.

They consider that the Board of Governors should have more control over the resident medical superintendent than is at present the case, that they ought to have the power of punishing that officer and all others connected with the institution. It is their opinion that the office of inspector of lunatic asylums is a most valuable one, when confined to its proper province; of seeing that the rules and regulations for the management of lunatic asylums are properly carried out, but they regret that the tendency of the present rules is to give the entire authority to the inspectors, and they have to complain of the manner in which their applications and recommendations in connection with the office and remuneration of the visiting physician have been disregarded on the report of the inspectors.

12 November 1873.

(signed) *Allen J. Walsh,*
Chairman.

Sir,

I beg leave to transmit, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, an extract from the minutes of proceedings of the Board of Governors of this asylum, at their meeting held on Tuesday, the 10th October ultimo, containing a statement of their views on the matters referred to in the "circular of 10th September last," as directed in your letter of the 13th instant, No. 14,610.

District Lunatic Asylum, Clonmel,
15 November 1873.

To the Under Secretary of State
for Ireland, Dublin Castle.

I have, &c.
(signed) *W. H. Garner,*
Resident Medical Superintendent.

Extract from Minutes of Board, 14 October 1873.

District Lunatic Asylum, Clonmel,
15 November 1873.

"THE circular letter from the Chief Secretary of 10th September, requesting the opinion of the Governors relative to a communication received by the Lord Lieutenant from the Governors of the Limerick Asylum, complaining of the rules for the guidance and management of asylums in Ireland, as laid down by the Privy Council in 1870, having been read;

"It was unanimously decided that this Board consider the rules of 1870, quite satisfactory, and called for no change."

(True copy.)

(signed) *W. H. Garner,*
Resident Medical Superintendent.

Sir,

District Asylum, Armagh, 15 November 1873.

In answer to your letter of the 13th inst., which refers to the circular letter of the 10th September last, addressed to the Governors of District Asylums, I beg leave to state, that at a meeting of the Board of Governors of this Asylum held on the 10th inst., the following resolution was unanimously adopted :—

“That not having hitherto found any difficulty in the management of this asylum, we decline for the present to recommend any alterations in the Privy Council Rules of 1871.”

I am, &c.

(signed) *Robert McKinstry*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

Sir,

District Lunatic Asylum, Ennis, 18 November 1873.

In reply to your letter of the 13th inst., I beg to state that the circular letter of the 16th September, was specially considered by the Board of Governors of this Asylum, at their meeting held on the 13th instant, and that the following resolution was adopted thereon :—

“Proposed by John Enright, Esq., and seconded by Major Stoddert, that having considered the whole subject, and the various causes of complaint put forward, this Board does not at present consider the proposed changes desirable.”

I am, &c.

(signed) *William Daxon*,
Resident Medical Superintendent.

To the Under Secretary, Dublin Castle.

CIRCULAR to Resident Medical Superintendents of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland.

Council Office, Dublin Castle,
20 December 1873.

Sir,

I AM directed to acquaint you, for the information of the Board of Governors of the District Lunatic Asylum, that the objections made by the Board of Governors of the Limerick Asylum to the general rules and regulations made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council in 1870, for the management of district lunatic asylums in Ireland, together with the answers to the circular on the subject which was addressed to the several Boards of the other district lunatic asylums on the 10th September, have been laid by his Excellency's direction before the Privy Council, and have been referred to a committee, which will meet for the purpose of considering the same on Wednesday, the 7th of January next, at 11 o'clock a.m., in the Council Chamber, Dublin Castle; and the committee will be prepared, on that occasion, to give a personal hearing to any Governors of any Asylum who may wish to be heard on the subject.

I am, &c.

The Resident Medical Superintendent
of the District Lunatic Asylum.

(signed) *R. N. Matheson*,
Clerk of the Council.

Sir,

Council Office, 30 March 1874.

I TRANSMIT herewith, for the use of the District Lunatic Asylum, and for the information of the Board of Governors, twenty copies of amended general rules and regulations for the management of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, made by the Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council on the 23rd ultimo.

I am, &c.

The Resident Medical Superintendent,
District Lunatic Asylum.

(signed) *R. N. Matheson*,
Clerk of the Council.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND).

COPIES of the GENERAL ORDER and Memorandum for the Management of the District Lunatic Asylum in Dublin having reference to Orders, of the Commissioners of the Commission of the Lunatic District of Lunatic Asylums, protecting against the Rights of the said Rules, of the Provisions contained in the Irish Government on the subject of the said Lunatic Asylums and Rules, of the Communications on the said subject between the said Government, officially and informally, and the Irish Government; and, of the Communications on the same subject between the Government of other District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland and the Irish Government.

(No. 1000.)

Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed,
25 July 1876.
